



Western Upper Peninsula Citizen Advisory Council DNR Division Reports

Date of Production: January 2021 (Information current as of 12/30/2020)

This documentation is provided by Michigan DNR staff as a supplement for Western UPCAC Council members. Please email or call with any questions.

Follow-Up from November 2020 WUPCAC Meeting

- **AuTrain Dam Project – Ms. Haughey:** Renewable World Energies/UP Hydro, LLC has drawn down the Au Train impoundment (aka Forest Lake or Cleveland Cliffs Basin) to conduct dam safety improvements that are required by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC). After completing the dam safety improvements, Renewable World Energies intends to surrender their FERC hydropower license and sell the dam and adjoining property they own. Prior to completing any dam modifications, RWE must obtain approval from FERC and permits from EGLE (formerly DEQ). Both the DNR and EGLE are working with Renewable World Energies and FERC to ensure the dam safety improvements and proposed surrender of the Au Train project are done in a manner that protects people and natural resources. If you have specific questions from the DNR perspective please contact Elle Gulotty at GulottyE@michigan.gov.

The following was on the AuTrain Township Website:

Forest Lake Reservoir -North Dam Information

Forest Lake Reservoir – Dam Modifications: On May 6, 2020 the township was notified by Renewable World Energies, LLC (RWE), acting as Agent on behalf of UP Hydro, LLC (licensee), of their plan to surrender their license to generate power at the Forest Lake Dam due to the cost of modifications needed to meet FERC's requirements. (This letter was the only correspondence the township received from RWE to date.)

RWE is in the process of obtaining permits from MI EGLE to modify the North Dam (cement structure) and South Levee to meet Michigan's requirements rather than removing the North Dam. On June 2nd, RWE filed a proposal to modify FERC Project #10856 (Forest Lake Reservoir) to meet the State of Michigan's spillway requirements in conjunction with a Notice of Intent to surrender the license. RWE was seeking authorization to perform dam safety upgrades at the North Dam beginning August 2020. RWE has stated they do not propose to remove the dam as the North Dam provides flood control for the downstream village of Au Train. RWE intends to perform spillway capacity upgrades at the Dam to meet Michigan Dam Safety standards as well as remove all the power generating the equipment from the powerhouse. RWE stated in a document filed with Ferc, the spillway modifications will allow the dam to pass a 200-year flood through the North Dam under Michigan's Dam Safety Program. The spillway will be lowered by 5.5 feet, a section of the North Embankment will be lowered by 18 inches, and a section of the south levee will be modified to be no higher than 6 feet. The reservoir level will remain lowered permanently at a level that is consistent with the annual low water levels under the current license.

The State of Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy (EGLE) and the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) have been involved in this project. The US Fish & Wildlife Service also has been consulted. As this is a very complicated project, the Township has to rely on the expertise of all these agencies.

The Township has been waiting for a public comment period which has not yet occurred and to our knowledge no date has been set. But each and every resident of Alger County and beyond can send comments to FERC by visiting: <https://www.ferc.gov/> and using Docket P-10856. All comments will be filed in the docket and read by FERC who will respond to your comment. So if you have concerns, it is important that you take time to file an eComment now.

- **CWD Prevalence & Testing Goal Modeling Written Description for Council (from Dr. O'Brien) (Gajewski) – Ms. Haughey:** Response pending 12/23/20
- **Status of Antlerless Permits for Public & Private Land (St. John) – Ms. Haughey:** As of 12/23/20

Hunt Code 1022 Management Unit 022 Public & CFA Land
Land Type Public
Remaining SOLD OUT

Hunt Code 1055 Management Unit 055 Public & CFA Land
Land Type Public
Remaining SOLD OUT

Hunt Code 1121 Management Unit 121 Public & CFA Land
Land Type Public
Remaining SOLD OUT

Hunt Code 1122 Management Unit 122 Public & CFA Land
Land Type Public
Remaining SOLD OUT

Hunt Code 1155 Management Unit 155 Public & CFA Land
Land Type Public
Remaining SOLD OUT

Hunt Code 1255 Management Unit 255 Public & CFA Land
Land Type Public
Remaining SOLD OUT

Hunt Code 2022 Management Unit 022 Private Land Only
Land Type Private
Remaining SOLD OUT - Not valid on CFA Land

Hunt Code 2055 Management Unit 055 Private Land Only
Land Type Private
Remaining 1794 - Not valid on CFA Land

Hunt Name DMU 121 Management Unit 121 Private Land Only
Land Type Private
Remaining SOLD OUT - Not valid on CFA Land

Hunt Code 2122 Management Unit 122 Private Land Only
Land Type Private
Remaining 288 - Not valid on CFA Land

Hunt Code 2155 Management Unit 155 Private Land Only
Land Type Private
Remaining 437 - Not valid on CFA Land

Hunt Code 2255 Management Unit 255 Private Land Only
Land Type Private
Remaining SOLD OUT - Not valid on CFA Land

- **Supplemental Feeding vs. Recreational Feeding (Schulz) – Ms. Haughey:** See below.
Deer Regulations - Wildlife Conservation Order Amendment No. 8 of 2020 - **PROPOSED**
Page 6 - November 25, 2020

Supplemental and Recreational Feeding

The Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act, PA 451 of 1994, MCL 324.40111a authorizes the NRC to regulate the feeding of deer in Michigan. This authority provides the NRC with the ability to regulate the depositing, distributing, or tending of feed to prevent deer from starving or for recreational viewing. Current regulations allow individuals to supplemental feed with a permit or recreationally feed in the UP under certain criteria except in the Core CWD Surveillance Area. The Department has identified certain issues related to supplemental and recreational feeding, including safety issues, confusion, and unenforceable regulations. Department staff have reviewed these issues and recommends simplifying and creating consistency between supplemental and recreational feeding, where possible. Specifically, the Department recommends:

- Simplify supplemental feeding by no longer requiring a permit.
- Eliminate confusion by defining dates when supplemental feeding can start and end (can no longer occur before January 1 and not extend beyond May 15).
- Eliminate safety concerns by allowing the Department to prohibit recreational or supplemental feeding if a location is deemed to be a public safety issue.
- Make recreational and supplemental feeding consistent by allowing these feeding types under the same conditions (e.g., cannot hunt over, cannot use as bait).
- Fixing unenforceable regulations by requiring the placement of feed be restricted to two gallons per residence per calendar day and no more than two gallons of feed may be present at any one time for recreational feeding.

Issues Pros/Cons

The proposed regulations will simplify and create consistent regulations between supplemental and recreational feeding, resulting in better regulatory compliance and more enforceable regulations. In addition, the proposed regulations eliminate confusion and safety concerns associated with both types of feeding. There may be some confusion with individuals who are aware of the current differences between supplemental and recreational feeding, or to those who receive a supplemental feeding permit every year, however the Department will continue effective communications and customer service related to the regulatory changes.

Biological

The Department recognizes that individuals and groups want to artificially feed to prevent deer from starving or for recreational viewing; however evidence suggests that feeding increases both the congregation of deer and the risk of disease transmission through increasing the probability of contact, food source contamination, and environmental contamination. In addition, the longer the food is on the landscape, the greater the likelihood of increasing disease transmission.

Social

The Department has observed supplemental deer feeding permits and feeding sites to assess how prevalent deer feeding is on the landscape. The number of supplemental feeding permits has decreased (69 permits in 2014 to 21 permits in 2019) while the number of feeding sites has increased (~30 in 2018 to 350+ in 2019). This may be due to confusion of the two feeding types that leads to low regulatory compliance. Eliminating the permit and creating consistency between the two feeding types will result in more enforceable regulations and regulatory compliance.

There have also been some safety concerns associated with recreational and supplemental feeding. The Department has observed feeding sites to be hazardous in some situations, causing a public safety concern. For example, feeding sites that are near busy roads can be dangerous because they can cause deer/vehicle collisions, or feeding sites near public places can be dangerous because people can get too close to wildlife. The Department can avoid these dangerous situations with the authority to prohibit feeding if a location is deemed to be a hazard.

Economic

Feeding has an economic value as market for agricultural products.

Upper Peninsula Field Deputy Update – Stacy Haughey

WUPCAC Council Member Term Expirations

This is the time of year, every few years, when term limits expire for half of the Council. The following terms are up for renewal: **Floyd Dripps, Mike Holmes, Dave Johnson, George Lindquist, Mary Peterson, Skip Schulz, Travis Smith, Tom Solka, Warren Suchovsky**. Please let Kristi know via email if you wish to be considered for another 4-year term. We also have two vacancies left by Jake Putula and Phil Wirtanen this past year. The Selection Committee process will be initiated after the new year to solicit applications through a press release for any vacancies and choose new members based on a variety of factors. If you know of anyone wishing to apply, please direct them to www.michigan.gov/upcac to print off an application to complete and send in. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Stacy or Kristi.

December 18, 2020

Contact: press@michigan.gov

Governor Whitmer Makes Appointments to Boards and Commissions

Michigan Natural Resources Commission

Thomas A. Baird, of Elk Rapids, is the owner of Thomas Baird Consultants. He holds an associate's degree in general studies from Grand Rapids Junior College, a Bachelor of Sciences in Political Science and Psychology from Grand Valley State University, and a Juris Doctor degree from the University of Michigan. Mr. Baird is appointed to represent Democrats for a term commencing January 1, 2021 and expiring December 31, 2024. He succeeds Christopher Tracy whose term expires December 31, 2020.

David Cozad, of Bay City, is the president of Mainstream Resources. He holds a Bachelor of Science in Biology from Alma College and a Master of Science in Aquatic Biology from Central Michigan University. Mr.

Cozad is appointed to represent Democrats for a term commencing January 1, 2021 and expiring December 31, 2024. He succeeds Louise Klarr whose term expires December 31, 2020.

The Michigan Natural Resources Commission (NRC) has exclusive authority to regulate the taking of game and sportfish and is authorized to designate game species and authorize the establishment of the first open season for animals through the issuance of orders.

These appointments are subject to the advice and consent of the Senate.

How to Participate in the NRC Meetings

- If you're unable to attend the meeting but wish to submit written comments on agenda items, please write to: Natural Resources Commission, P.O. Box 30028, Lansing, MI 48909 or email: nrc@michigan.gov.
- If you would like further information or would like to address the Commission, please contact the NRC Assistant at 517-284-6237 or email: nrc@michigan.gov. Persons registering on or before the Friday preceding the meeting will be allowed up to five (5) minutes for their presentation. Persons registering after the Friday preceding the meeting or at the meeting will be allowed up to three (3) minutes. Persons with disabilities needing accommodations should contact the NRC Assistant.
- Look for the agendas and other Natural Resources Commission items at the Natural Resources Commission webpage (www.michigan.gov/NRC).

January 14, 2021 (9:00 am EST) NRC Draft Agenda

Draft Agenda (Subject to Change Prior to January 14, 2021 Meeting)

AGENDA NOTE: *In response to the COVID-19 emergency, the January meeting will be held in an online format with the opportunity for the public to view the meeting online and provide public comment by telephone. If you would like to provide public comment, please email NRC@michigan.gov. Online meeting link: TBD*

- I. Call to Order – Chair Carol Moncrieff Rose
- II. Roll Call
- III. Approval of Agenda
- IV. Approval of December 10, 2020 Meeting Minutes
- V. NRC Committee of the Whole
 - A. Director's Report
 - i. Fish Division Update- Fish Order 245 (Herbst)
 - ii. Wildlife Division Update-Elk Season Results (Stewart)
 - iii. Forest Resources Management Update-Public Act 288 (Stampfly)
- VI. Public Comment
 - A. 5 Minute Comments
 - B. 3 Minute Comments
- VII. New Business
 - A. Land Transactions
 - i. Land Transaction Case # 20190244, Sale of Surplus DNR-Managed Land, Gaylord District – Emmet County
 - ii. Land Transaction Case # 20200156, Sale of Surplus DNR-Managed Land, Grayling Management Unit – Crawford County
 - B. Director's Orders
 - i. Land Use Orders of the Director Amendment No. 1 of 2021, Public Act 288 (PA 288) of 2016; Forest Road Inventory Update
 - C. NRC Orders

- i. Fish Order 245.21, Fish Disease Control
- VIII. Old Business
 - A. Director's Orders – none
 - B. NRC Orders
 - i. Deer Regulations, Wildlife Conservation Order Amendment No. 8 of 2020
- IX. Commissioner Reports
- X. Adjournment

Signed copies of recommended amendments, orders and transactions may be requested through the NRC assistant by calling 517-284-6237 or emailing nrc@michigan.gov.

If you're unable to attend the meeting but wish to submit written comments on agenda items, please write to: Natural Resources Commission, P.O. Box 30028, Lansing, MI 48909 or email: nrc@michigan.gov. If you would like further information or would like to address the Commission, please contact the NRC Assistant at 517-284-6237 or email: nrc@michigan.gov. Persons registering on or before the Friday preceding the meeting will be allowed up to five (5) minutes for their presentation. Persons registering after the Friday preceding the meeting or at the meeting will be allowed up to three (3) minutes. Persons with disabilities needing accommodations should contact the NRC Assistant. Look for this agenda and other Natural Resources Commission items at Natural Resources Commission webpage (www.michigan.gov/NRC).

December NRC Meeting Summary – Ed Golder, Public Information Officer

The Michigan Natural Resources Commission met December 10, 2020 in an online conference format.

Committee of the Whole

DNR Director Dan Eichinger announced new DNR Wildlife Division Chief Jared Duquette from Illinois. Duquette is a native Michigander from St. Charles, MI and attained his B.S. from Central Michigan University. He has worked in several states across the U.S. and internationally, including research on deer disease prevention (TB) in northeast Michigan and Ph.D. work on the predator-prey study in the Upper Peninsula. In his most recent position with the Illinois DNR, he managed hunter R3 and public outreach initiatives and served many other duties, such as CWD management. He is very collaborative and has worked on starting new initiatives in Illinois, while getting buy-in from both internal and external stakeholders. He is also involved in diversity, equity and inclusion initiatives within his agency, which further highlights his collaborative nature. His start date was Nov. 29. Since he will be on mandatory telework like everyone else except the field, he will be working from his home in Illinois while he looks for a residence to transition to Michigan over the next few months.

Director Eichinger also discussed DNR licensing system difficulties on Nov. 14, the Saturday before the opening day of the firearm deer hunting season. System performance was reported as slow that day. The amount of computing power on the system was starting to spike, causing lags and drags. The trigger for the problem was identified and a work around was put in place. The DNR worked to accommodate hunters on opening day, with hunters asked to follow-up with the department. The DNR law enforcement division reported good compliance. Subsequently, it was determined that the problem with the system was not volume based but was due to a backup of the vendor's licensing system at the same time the license buying surge occurred in Michigan. The problem was not isolated to Michigan. The vendor also reported similar problems in other states. The DNR communicated to the vendor that this was an unacceptable situation to be avoided in the future.

Director's action

Director Eichinger said he would be approving six land transactions, which involve several Michigan counties, including Charlevoix, Kalkaska, Ontonagon, Dickinson, Gogebic, Houghton and Iron counties.

Commission action

The NRC **did not vote today on proposed Phase II deer regulations. The item will be available for action on the January 2021 meeting agenda, though commissioners said they anticipated not having a decision made until the February 2021 meeting. Amendments discussed at today's meeting were also not voted on but will be considered in future discussions.** The regulations, if approved, would be in effect for 2021.

Part of the discussion included four amendments proposed prior to today's meeting. Here are the amendments:

Commissioner Creagh: Immediately terminate the antler point restriction study in deer management units 034, 054, and 059, if the CWD prevalence rate in the APR townships is higher than the prevalence rate in the non-APR townships.

After further discussion today, Commissioner Creagh withdrew his amendment. He then proposed a new amendment that the APR regulation would be rescinded in those same deer management units at the end of 2021 deer hunting season. The amendment will be brought forward to future NRC discussions.

Commissioner Nyberg: Retain Section 3.101a (Deer hunting in zone 1 season limit and, antler restriction) also known as “Hunter’s Choice,” and all associated references throughout the order.

Commissioner Richardson: Remove the proposed changes that would allow the use of crossbows during the late archery season in the UP.

Commissioner Richardson: During bow and arrow season in Zone 1, antlerless deer may only be taken in DMUs that allow antlerless licenses. Specifically, antlerless deer shall not be taken in DMUs 127, 066, 131, 042, 031, 007, and 048. This does not apply to any DMU within a designated core CWD surveillance area.

In July 2020, the Natural Resources Commission approved deer regulations for the 2020 deer hunting season as part of the first package of deer regulations for the 2020-2022 deer regulations cycle. The first package of regulations (Phase I) focused on providing additional opportunities and cost savings for hunters and offered flexibility in how hunters pursue deer.

In preparation for the second package of regulations for the 2021- 2022 deer hunting seasons (Phase II), the department reviewed various regulations, including antlerless quotas and licenses, and antler point restrictions. These regulations were reviewed and developed by internal staff and discussed with partners and the public through surveys and public meetings. The department’s recommendations, as explained in a DNR memorandum, are intended to simplify, and reduce confusing regulations, and remove barriers to participation in deer hunting. In addition, deer management tools and regulation recommendations that must be implemented into the retail sales system must be acted on to allow time for development and implementation by the March 2021 license year.

The proposed regulations memorandum and background on the proposed amendments are attached (forwarded to you in a separate email previously by Kristi).

A December legislative report is below.

The appointment terms of Commissioners Louise Klarr and Chris Tracy are ending at the end of this month. Gov. Whitmer will act on reappointments or appointing replacements.

The next meeting of the NRC is scheduled for Jan. 14, 2021. The format for this meeting will also be a virtual session.

December 2020 Legislative Updates – Craig Brunet, Legislative & Legal Affairs Office

HBs 6307 and 6308 – Prohibit Anchor Strikes in the Straits of Mackinac – Reps. Hood and Allor

This legislative package provides for a requirement for maritime pilot and prohibition of anchors in Straits of Mackinac.

- The bills were referred to the House Committee on Natural Resources and Outdoor Recreation.
- The Administration has not yet taken a position on this legislation.

HB 6316 – Prohibit Antler Point Restrictions in Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) Zones - Rep. Albert

The bill would prohibit the DNR from having antler point restrictions (APR) in CWD zones. In addition, the DNR would be required to deposit fifty cents from each deer license and antlerless deer license in a newly created CWD testing and research subaccount with funds used to conduct research and surveillance, to create educational materials, and to enforce orders related to CWD. The DNR would also be required to sell a CWD testing tag for \$5 to any individual who wishes to have their deer tested and the fee would be deposited into new account. In addition, the DNR would be required to make at least one CWD check station or drop station available during any deer hunting season in any county in a CWD area.

- The bill was referred to the House Committee on Natural Resources and Outdoor Recreation and one hearing has been held.
- The Administration is opposed to this legislation.

HB 6321 – Exempt Certain Game Location Data from FOIA – Rep. Cherry

This bill amends the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) to allow for a disclosure exemption of public records revealing the specific location or GPS coordinates of game animals.

- The bill was passed by the House Committee on Natural Resources and Outdoor Recreation and referred to the House Committee on Ways and Means.
- The Administration is in support of this legislation.

HBs 6327 and 6328 – Provide Free Snowmobile Weekend on Snowmobile Trails – Rep. S. Johnson

House Bill 6327 would require that before the start of each snow mobile season, the DNR would be required to designate one weekend in the snowmobile season during which a registration would not be required to operate a snowmobile on snowmobile trails. House Bill 6328 would require that before the start of each snow mobile season, the DNR would be required to designate one weekend in the snowmobile season during which a trail permit would not be required to operate a snowmobile on snowmobile trails.

- The bills were referred to the House Committee on Natural Resources and Outdoor Recreation.
- The Administration has not yet taken a position on this legislation.

HB 6466 – Provide for Lake Level Assessment Fee Reimbursement Under Certain Circumstances – Rep. VanSingel

This bill would amend the Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act (NREPA), 1994 PA 451, to specify that PILT paid by the Department of Treasury to each county for DNR-managed swamp and tax reverted lands is to be in lieu of all special assessments levied against these state lands under existing law, in addition to all other taxes.

- The bill was passed by the House Committee on Natural Resources and Outdoor Recreation and referred to the House Committee Ways and Means.
- The Administration is in support of this legislation.

If you would like to learn more about these and other bills, you can access the Michigan Legislature website at www.legislature.mi.gov.

Good Information to Know

DNR Public Meetings – Future Dates

For virtual or conference call meeting information, please go to the DNR website at: www.michigan.gov/DNRMeetings and click on the appropriate meeting and/or agenda for instructions.

January 7	Western UP Citizens’ Advisory Council Meeting (virtual) (call 906-226-1331 to attend)
January 13	Forest Management Advisory Committee (virtual) (call 517-284-5876 to attend)
January 14	Natural Resources Commission Meeting (virtual) (call 517-284-6237 to attend)
February 9	Eastern UP Citizens’ Advisory Council Meeting (virtual) (call 906-226-1331 to attend)
February 11	Natural Resources Commission Meeting (virtual) (call 517-284-6237 to attend)
March 11	Natural Resources Commission Meeting (virtual) (call 517-284-6237 to attend)
March 18	Western UP Citizens’ Advisory Council Meeting (virtual) (call 906-226-1331 to attend)

U.P. State Park & State Sponsored Activities

Please check with the state park before attending activity for any scheduling changes.

January 1	Michigan State Park Virtual First Day Hikes
January 22	NotMISpecies Webinar – Hemlock Rescue! (email for more info: foremanj@michigan.gov)
February 6	Tahquamenon Falls State Park – Lantern-lit Snowshoe Trail
February 13	Tahquamenon Falls State Park – Lantern-lit Snowshoe Trail
February 20	Tahquamenon Falls State Park – Lantern-lit Snowshoe Trail
February 27	Tahquamenon Falls State Park – Lantern-lit Snowshoe Trail
April 22-30	Run for the Trees/Happy Little Virtual 5K (Michigan.gov/DNRHappyLittleTrees)

Recent DNR Press Releases

For full details, go to: www.michigan.gov/dnrpressroom

- New episodes of Outdoor Channel's 'Wardens,' featuring DNR, start today (12/28/20)
 - Winter fun is here! (12/23/20)
 - Showcasing the DNR: Self-care Saturday is a walk in the park (12/23/20)
 - Seasonal songbirds, First Day Hikes and ice safety tips (12/21/20)
 - Keep safety in mind when enjoying winter outdoor recreation (12/21/20)
 - Showcasing the DNR: Arctic grayling transferred to Marquette State Fish Hatchery (12/17/20)
 - DNR cancels winter Becoming an Outdoors Woman workshop (12/17/20)
 - Share your thoughts with the DNR at upcoming virtual meetings (12/16/20)
 - Successful summit just the beginning for promoting mass timber in Michigan (12/15/20)
 - A journey of 1,200 feet moves state park's historic building out of harm's way (12/15/20)
 - Late antlerless deer opener, Outdoor Skills Academy, Big Tree Hunt and more! (12/14/20)
 - New hunting digest format feedback (12/14/20)
 - Michigan winter fur harvesting opportunities (12/11/20)
 - Showcasing the DNR: Ospreys' comeback (12/10/20)
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Dec. 3, 2020 Contact: [Jon Mayes](mailto:Jon.Mayes@Michigan.gov), 517-284-5954

Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund board recommends \$37.8 million to boost outdoor recreation

The Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund Board recommended Wednesday to the Michigan Legislature that 76 recreation development projects and land acquisitions totaling \$37,789,600 be funded in 2021. The board this year considered a total of 136 applications seeking over \$60 million in funding. In a competitive process, all eligible applications were evaluated based on scoring criteria approved by the Trust Fund board.

"Easy access to the beauty of Michigan's natural places and open spaces during a challenging, uncertain year has been a source of comfort and connection for residents across our state, and the Trust Fund is a major part of making those opportunities available," said Gov. Gretchen Whitmer. "Whether you're enjoying a trail or park close to home or exploring the deep forest, outdoor recreation resources like these are big contributors to each community's quality of life and unique appeal."

The Trust Fund board recommends funding to both state and local agencies for development projects and land acquisitions that will further access to public outdoor recreation.

This year, the board recommended \$27,289,600 for [acquisition grants](#) and \$10,500,000 for [development grants](#). There were 26 acquisition grants awarded to local units of government for a total of \$20,805,400, while four acquisition grants went to the Michigan Department of Natural Resources for projects totaling \$6,484,200. The Trust Fund board also recommended a total of \$9,300,000 in 42 development grants be awarded to local units of government while four DNR projects garnered a total of \$1,200,000.

"This year's grant recommendations represent a broad range of land acquisition and outdoor development projects that will make a real difference," said DNR Director Dan Eichinger. "With the results of Proposal 1 this fall, it's clear that Michigan's residents support this program and its continued investment in projects that speak to the recreational needs of communities across our state."

The Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund is a restricted fund that was established in 1976 to provide funding for public acquisition of lands for resource protection and outdoor recreation, as well as for public outdoor recreation development projects. It is funded through interest and earnings on funds derived from the revenues of state-owned oil, gas and minerals. Over the past 44 years, the Trust Fund has granted more than \$1.2 billion to state and local units of government to develop and improve recreation opportunities in Michigan.

"Under the challenges of gathering with friends and family this year, outdoor spaces and public recreation played a major component in people's lives," said Trust Fund board chair Bill Rustem. "This program's ability to continue to acquire and develop parks and green spaces is more important now than ever to ensure that every Michigander has access to the state's natural resources."

The Trust Fund board's recommendations will go to the Michigan Legislature for review as part of the appropriations process. Upon approval, the Legislature forwards a bill to the governor for her signature.

A list of the final recommendations made by the Trust Fund board is available at [Michigan.gov/MNRTF](https://www.michigan.gov/MNRTF). A list of the recommendations for UP communities, see below.

2020 Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund Recommendations

(Anticipated approval in early 2021)

2020 **Development** Project Upper Peninsula Recommendations

Project County	Applicant	Project Title	Grant Award
Houghton	DNR - Wildlife Division	Sturgeon River Sloughs Bridge Development Initiative	\$300,000
Gogebic	City of Ironwood	Norrie Park Renovation and Montreal River Water Trail	\$111,300
Mackinac	Portage Township	Portage Creek Fishing Access	\$50,000
Mackinac	Portage Township	Shoepac Creek Fishing Access	\$50,000
Marquette	City of Negaunee	Jackson Mine Park Playground Development	\$125,700
Marquette	City of Marquette	Mattson Lower Harbor Park - Inclusive Playground	\$300,000
Marquette	DNR - Parks and Recreation Division	Little Presque Isle Trail Development and Renovation	\$300,000

2020 **Acquisition** Project Upper Peninsula Recommendations

Project County	Applicant	Project Title	Grant Award
Chippewa	Whitefish Township	Expansion of Saturn Memorial Township Park	\$185,000
Delta	DNR - Forest Resources Division	Lake Michigan Dune & Swale Complex	\$2,600,000
Dickinson	Waucedah Township	Sturgeon River Scenic Park Acquisition Project	\$2,129,000
Gogebic	Gogebic County	Gogebic County Forest Expansion	\$3,182,200
Ontonagon	Ontonagon Township	Ontonagon Township Lake Superior Sandy Beach Acquisition	\$100,000

Eastern UPCAC Update

The **Eastern UP Citizen's Advisory Council's December 16th meeting** was held via Zoom. 50 participants logged on including council members, DNR staff, legislative staff and public attendees. Agenda items included:

- DNR Update on Wolf Delisting
- Registered Public Comments regarding wolves (7 registered)
- Council Consideration of Resolution: After a lengthy discussing and hearing multiple public comments, the council approved a resolution to support adding two items to the current wolf management plan: 1) expanding hunting and trapping area to the entire UP and 2) a long-term population goal for the UP.
- Fish Tales: A Review of the Fisheries Division's Priorities for Aquatic Invasive Species
- Deer Season Recap (to date)

- Proposed 2021 Deer Regulations Recommendations & Timeline
- Follow-Up from October Meeting (Percentage of State Land Acquired with MNRTF & Bear Harvest Numbers for Newberry Unit)
- Chronic Wasting Disease Updates
- Update on Proposed ORV Seasonal Land Use Order
- DNR Reports from Division Staff
- Subcommittee Reports (Fisheries & Policy Impact)
- Public Comments (2 Registered: State of Deer Season/Archery Doe Permits in EUP & Efforts to Improve or Manage Deere Yarding Between Newberry & Eckerman)
- The next meeting will be held February 9, 2021 virtually.

Division Updates

Public Information: John Pepin, Deputy Public Information Officer

This month, we finished out Ask the DNR broadcasts for 2020. The broadcasts will resume April 1 and May 6, 2021. Past broadcasts are available online for viewing at <https://wnmuvideo.nmu.edu/show/ask-dnr/>. The most recent broadcast from this month is there along with many previous shows. We are in the process of developing a schedule of Showcasing the DNR stories for the first quarter of 2021. Please send any story ideas to me at pepinj@michigan.gov DNR protocols for media interviews have been changed to allow for in-person interviews with news media. However, strict coronavirus protocols must be followed. For a list of these measures, directly intended for media interviews, please ask and I will send them to you. Thanks very much. Happy holidays!

Parks & Recreation Division: Doug Rich, WUP District Supervisor

How was camping during this bi-monthly period?

[More Details](#)

- Up 3
- Down 0
- Similar to the same period last... 2
- Closed / N/A 6



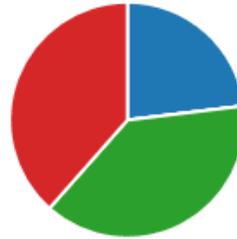
Significant changes, projects or notes about camping

Unit	Responses
District Wide	All modern camping facilities across the district were shut down for winter approximately November first. State Forest Campgrounds are still open pending being snowed in.
Twin Lakes	Twin Lakes have never seen these numbers still camping in Oct., with new campers not used to fall weather in the U.P.
Bewabic	The Escanaba FO and Baraga FO came and cut down oak wilt trees in the campground. Project took about one week. Bewabic staff completed part of our hazard tree removal.
Planning	Baraga State Park - Construction of upgrades to the campground electrical and wet well has received is 100% complete and is now in the warranty period. The work included 14 full hookup campsites, pull thru campsites, a modern electrical utility system including 50 amp campsites, and upgrades to the park's wet well.

How was overnight lodging during this bi-monthly period?

[More Details](#)

● Up	3
● Down	0
● Similar to last year	5
● Closed / N/A	5



Significant changes, projects or notes about overnight lodging

Unit	Responses
Twin Lakes	Unit is working on repair projects in our Lodge, roof, and ceiling, still have some work in our new entrance.
Porcupine Mountains	Cabins and Yurts at 100% occupancy
Craig Lake	The cabins and yurts were just as busy as last year, as they are almost completely booked each year.
Little Presque Isle	Additional cabin days were closed this winter to allow staff to meet required Covid cleaning to keep visitors safe.

How was use at boating access sites and/or harbors during this bi-monthly period?

[More Details](#)

● Up	0
● Down	0
● Similar to last year	12
● Closed / N/A	3



Significant changes, projects or notes about boating

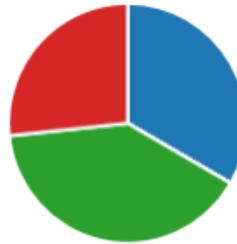
Name	Responses
Baraga SP	Skid piers pulled for the season
J.W. Wells	Menominee BAS site erosion project completed. Rip rap along shoreline 950' This was in partnership with the City of Menominee.
Bewabic	Bewabic staff cut approximately 120 oak skid pier posts on our district sawmill from trees that came from Bewabic. The oaks were infected with oak wilt, and we made lemonade from lemons.
Baraga FO	Skid piers pulled the first week in November
Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bergland Boating Access Site - Project is 100% complete, all punch list items completed. Copper Harbor historic light house and lightkeepers residence. Construction of the stone and brick masonry repairs were completed on 10/1/2020. \$252,000 in design and construction funding has been allocated. Eagle Harbor State Harbor - Engineering, analysis, and design of improvements at Harbor will continue into 2020. Improvements to the site utilities, mooring facility, and harbor master building are being considered. A design contract was awarded to Edgewater Resources. The data collection of existing site conditions is underway. The analysis of potential of design improvements is 95% complete, a public meeting was held August 21, 2019. The DNR reviewed development recommendations on October 28, 2019. A total of \$625,000 has been allocated for design and construction. A final design scope has been identified but not formally accepted. Discussions with the Township are on-going regarding the operation of the harbor. Note: This project has been on hold since April 3, 2020 due to DNR Executive Directive implementing a spending freeze and restarted in fall of 2020. The DNR performed high water and erosion vulnerability assessments in the fall of 2020 and is considering augmented shoreline protective measures. Ford River Boating access site - Design of asphalt paving and site lighting improvements was completed in 2019. The project has obtained EGLE permits and USACE permits. Due to high water impacts to

Name	Responses
	<p>boating facilities across the State of Michigan - this project was placed on hold in February 2020. The project restarted in fall of 2020 with construction anticipated in 2021.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bewabic State Park - An analysis of replacing the park's on-site sewage disposal began on 12/12/2019. The project looks to replace aging sewage disposal for both campground toilet shower buildings and the sanitation station. Note: This project has been on hold since April 3, 2020 due to DNR Executive Directive implementing a spending freeze and restarted in fall 2020. • Menominee River boating access site - \$136,000 has been invested in shoreline armoring due to Lake Michigan High water levels. This shoreline armoring project was completed in partnership with the City of Menominee in November of 2020 and resulted in approximately 920' of shoreline being armored. An additional \$250,000 has been awarded for the following purposes: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Armoring an additional 750' of shoreline. 2. Designing asphalt pavement improvements to the entrance road and parking lot. 3. Repairs to the DNR's portion of the break wall. • Cedar River State Harbor - \$300,000 has been awarded for design and construction of improvements / repairs to the Harbor's fuel dock (which is below current Lake Michigan water levels), replacement of a section of sidewalk which failing, and replacement of potable water fixtures within the existing utility pedestals. Note: This project has been on hold since April 3, 2020 due to DNR Executive Directive implementing a spending freeze and restarted in the fall of 2020.

How was use at trails during this bi-monthly period?

[More Details](#)

Up	5
Down	0
Similar to last year	6
Closed / N/A	4



Significant changes, projects or notes about trails

Unit	Responses
Fort Wilkins	Trails have been cleared and prepped for the x-country ski season
Escanaba FO	Timber harvesting completed along Days River Pathway
Porcupine Mountains	Trails have been cleared and prepped for the x-country ski season
Craig Lake	Trails saw many additional visitors this fall as the leaves turned. The weather was in our favor and brought in heavy use.
Planning	Porcupine Mountains Wilderness State Park - North Country / Iron Belle Trail bridge over the Little Iron River. Design of a new bridge is 100% complete. Construction proposed in 2021. Total project funding = \$372,000. The project was bid out in February 2020, the bidding process resulted in a cancellation of bids due to being over budget and due to Covid-19. Note: This project has been on hold since April 3, 2020 due to DNR Executive Directive implementing a spending freeze and restarted in fall of 2020.

How was day use during this bi-monthly period?

[More Details](#)

Up	6
Down	0
Similar to last year	4
Closed / N/A	7



Significant changes, projects or notes about day use

Unit	Responses
Porcupine Mountains	Significantly more deer hunters this year than usual.
Planning	Porcupine Mountains Wilderness State Park - Lake Superior Sportsman's Club - A phase 100 study of development opportunities was completed on 11-15-2018. The final design of a new in-door shooting facility and clubhouse is 25%. The preliminary design became 90% complete on 12-12-2019. Construction is anticipated in 2021. A \$300,000 MNRTF grant award has been announced in addition to Federal USFWS grant funds. The project has an approximately \$2.2 million dollar project budget.

Were there any special events, volunteer projects, accomplishments, challenges, or personnel news you would like to highlight?

Name	Responses
Twin Lakes	I would like to thank the MRS crew for the fine work done at twin lakes S.P. this summer. Even though their time was short a lot of work was accomplished. I would also thank our STW staff this summer in dealing with the Covid restrictions and problems associated with it, they did a great job managing campers from all over the United States.
Escanaba	Through partnerships the division is working on a pilot project to have partners snowplow at several boating access sites in the central U.P.
District	The Office of State Employer has granted permission to hire for the vacant Fort Wilkins' laborer, The Porkies manager and general office assistant and F.J. McLain's unit supervisor
Van Riper	Mr. Kyle Loup, in house seasonal ranger at Van Riper State Park accepted the Permanent Intermittent Ranger position within the unit. Congratulations on your change in position Kyle!
Bewabic	All seasonal staff have been laid off as of November 28th. Only supervisor on duty until end of February.
Baraga SP	Dan Dowdy is no longer WOC Manager for the Porkies and has returned to BSP.
Baraga FO	Unit assisted with oak wilt removal at Bewabic State Park
Lake Gogebic	The travel crew continues to work on the tiny house for Lake Gogebic State Park and the Porcupine Mountains State Park. The Michigan National Guard is building one tiny house for the unit out of the Gladstone Armory over the winter of 20/21.
Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • McLain SP - Phase 3 design is 25% complete. Phase 3 includes replacement of the park's sewage lagoon and potable drinking well(s), additional shoreline armoring in front of the park's well and sanitation station, and cabin renovations/relocations. Note: This project had been on hold since April 3, 2020 due to DNR Executive Directive implementing a spending freeze and re-started in Mid-September 2020. • Fort Wilkins Historic State Park - Final design of the replacement of the parks water lines is 50% complete. Construction is anticipated in 2021. Note: This project has been on hold since April 3, 2020 due to DNR Executive Directive implementing a spending freeze and has restarted in fall of 2020. • Van Riper State Park - Upgrades to the water treatment plant and water supply systems - \$175,000.00 has been allocated for design and construction. Design is 100% complete. The construction of the project is now 100% complete. The project team is working to further calibrate the systems operations. Water treatment processes remain effective at producing potable and aesthetically pleasing water. • Bewabic State Park - An analysis of replacing the park's on-site sewage disposal began on 12/12/2019. The project looks to replaces aging sewage disposal for both campground toilet shower buildings and the sanitation station. Note: This project has been on hold since April 3, 2020 due to DNR Executive Directive implementing a spending freeze and restarted in fall 2020.

Forest Resources Division: Tom Seablom, Western UP District Supervisor

- Staff continue to telework. Staff have been informed that this will continue till at least March of 2021. For more information on the DNR COVID- 19 response go to: Michigan.Gov/DNR.
- Field work on the 2023 YOE Inventory is starting. Open House and Compartment Review schedules will be posted on line when finalized posted, along with other state forest inventory information at: Michigan.Gov/Forestry.

- As of December 16th, 298 timber sale contracts are open WUP Wide. This represents 814,196 cords of timber on 46,417 acres, valued at approximately \$35.9 million. Included in this are 9 GNA sales representing 34,529 cords of timber on 2,648 acres, valued at approximately \$2.5 million
- WUP units report 33 Active Timber Sales in the WUP totaling about 2,107 acres. Most units report slow demand for timber with several offerings going no bid or being sold for the minimum bid amount. The Baraga unit reports stable demand for quality hardwoods.
- Forest fire protection staff have been working on early season snowmobile trail inspections and winterizing and repairing fire suppression equipment.
- Starting January 1st open enrollment for the Commercial Forest Program will continue until April 1st. For more information on the Commercial Forest Program go to Michigan.Gov/Commercialforest.

Fisheries Division: George Madison, Western Lake Superior Management Unit

The following are the western Upper Peninsula fisheries division highlights for the period of November 10, 2020 through January 6, 2021, on behalf of the following Western UP Fisheries Division staff:

- *Lake Superior Unit Basin Coordinator: Patrick Hanchin*
- *West Lake Superior Management Unit: George Madison*
- *Northern Lake Michigan Management Unit: Darren Kramer, Jennifer Johnson*
- *Fish Production Unit: Jan VanAmberg, James Aho*
- *Research Unit: Dr. Edward Baker, Dr. Troy Zorn, Shawn Sitar*

Fisheries Management Units (George Madison)

- Lake and stream survey report writing.
- Work plan development.
- Management prescriptions.
- Fish stocking requests.
- Annual biologist conference (virtual).
- Writing the splake chapter for the upcoming Lake Superior Fisheries Management Plan.

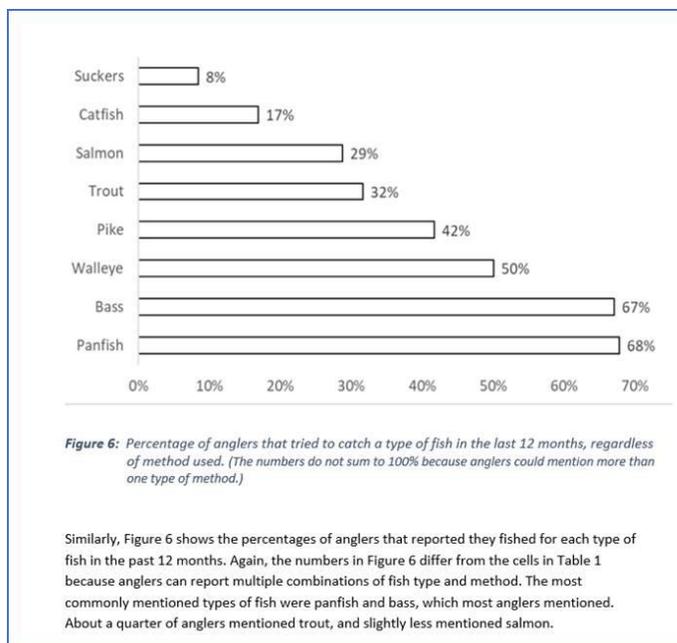
Michigan Recreational Angler Activities, Trips and Demographics

Frank Lupi
Michigan State University
lupi@msu.edu

September 30, 2020

Introduction

This report summarizes key findings on the general fishing activities, trips, and sociodemographic activities of Michigan's licensed anglers. The data for the report comes from the Michigan Recreational Angler Survey (MRAS) that was conducted from 2008 to 2019. Over the years portions of the data has been used for several analyses of specific angler behaviors (Simoes 2009, 2014), to inform management (e.g., bass and walleye management planning efforts), and to conduct analyses of the economic value of Michigan recreational fisheries (Melstrom and Lupi 2013; Melstrom et al. 2015). Since a general summary of survey findings is lacking, the goal of this report is to provide a reference and illustration for the types of data that are available and the types of inquires that can be made of the data to inform future management and decision-making.



Northern Lake Michigan Management Unit Updates (Darren Kramer)

- Greg Sanville, Bays de Noc/Manistique creel clerk, retired on November 30th after 29 years of service with the state. Greg was very well received by anglers and will be missed.
- Jennifer will be working to begin development of a Fisheries Division Policy for Mussel Mitigation Funds. This is going to be an issue for future drawdowns of reservoirs.
- Staff will be meeting later this month to finalize the 2021 field survey plan.
- Technicians have winterized equipment and on to entering survey data and aging structures.
- Darren has recently joined the FRD-State Forest Management Plan team to assist with fisheries input on the draft state forest management plan. Current work has included attending virtual planning team meetings and document reading to help focus where fisheries input/issues fit best into the plan framework.
- Dickinson County was the first county in the NLMMU to come up for state forest land review (approximately 4,100 acres over 148 parcels). Local and regional reviews have been completed, and this process looks much smoother and more efficient than the review from the early 2000s due to the number of current GIS tools available to support staff.

Marquette & Thompson Fisheries Fish Hatcheries (Jan VanAmberg-Manager)

Thompson State Fish Hatchery

- Fish Culture:
 - Received Chinook eggs from Platte Hatchery in November. Eggs had to be eyed at Platte to allow time to install new emergency generator and electrical panels at the coldwater hatchery.
 - Staff is working on several procurement issues related to coolwater project- new fish pump, wet gear for staff, treatment pump for incubation, mower etc.
 - Compiling pond fertilization protocols for extensive walleye fingerling production in new ponds. Anticipating production in the spring of 2021.
 - Moving/creating workspaces to enhance social distancing in the hatchery building.
- Maintenance:
 - The capital outlay project is rapidly progressing. Recent work completed includes completion of pond predator netting, roadways and pavement, perimeter fencing. Production wells have had pumps are installed and test pumping to fill the ponds has been completed.

Marquette State Fish Hatchery

- Fish Culture:
 - All char egg takes were completed with excellent egg quality in all lots.
 - Arctic Grayling future broodstock doing well in the hatchery building tanks.
 - Bacterial kidney disease screening completed on all brook trout pairings with very low incidence of BKD found.
 - Completed all assigned fall fingerling brook trout plants totaling 31,000 fish.

Marquette Fisheries Research Station (Dr. Edward Baker & Dr. Troy Zorn)

- Staff have been working on data analysis, study proposals, reports.

Law Enforcement Division (LED): Lt. Ryan Aho, District 1 Law Supervisor

- **COs Brian Lasanen, Doug Hermanson and Sergeant (Sgt.) Marc Pomroy** teamed up to work a complaint of a deer that was reported to have been shot while the suspect was trespassing. The COs located the deer at a local processor and developed a suspect to interview. After a short interview, it was determined the deer was shot from a vehicle on a roadway without permission, within a safety zone, and not immediately tagged. A warrant is being sought with the Houghton County Prosecutor's Office.
- **CO Ethen Mapes** responded to an ORV trespassing complaint near Bruce Crossing. Upon investigating ORV tracks onto the complainant's property, a gut pile was found. CO Mapes followed the ORV tracks to the neighbor's property where a large bait pile was found as well as an untagged deer. The owner of the deer admitted that he did not want to spend the money on an out of state deer license. Citations were written for over-limit of bait as well as possession of an untagged deer.
- **CO Ethen Mapes** contacted a rifle hunter that was dressed in all camouflage. The hunter also failed to provide a deer license in the field but later produced a license at the hunter's camp. A citation for not wearing hunter orange was issued to the hunter.

- **CO Jenni Hanson** received a phone call from a Bessemer resident who heard gunshots within the city limits. CO Hanson patrolled the area and asked numerous neighbors if they heard the shots and could pinpoint the direction from which they came. One of the people CO Hanson asked was an elderly woman, at the end of her driveway, who claimed she heard no gunshots. Shortly after, CO Hanson observed three individuals gutting a deer in the backyard of that residence. Upon contacting the three people, she observed the freshly killed deer was half-gutted but had not yet been tagged. CO Hanson asked who shot the deer and the group claimed 'Grandma' had shot the deer. CO Hanson asked to speak with grandma who was inside the house at that time. When grandma came out of the house, CO Hanson saw it was the same woman who claimed she had not heard gunshots. After a brief interview it was determined that grandma did not shoot the deer. The deer and an unused kill-tag were seized as evidence and enforcement action was taken.
- **CO Jeffrey Dell** was patrolling along a county road when he observed several deer hanging from a tree at a camp and one deer appeared to be improperly tagged. CO Dell stopped at the camp where he met the lone hunter there. CO Dell inspected the deer and observed that the doe had not been tagged and appeared to have been killed some time ago. The man stated he had killed it the day prior but needed to "get a tag on it still." CO Dell examined the man's tag which was in the camp and not validated. A citation was issued for possessing an untagged deer. The hunter validated his tag and kept the deer.
- **CO Shannon Kritz** received a RAP complaint about a property owner who was blocking access to state land with fence posts and fake DNR signage. CO Kritz removed the roadblock and set up a trail camera to catch the person who was blocking access to the state land. The second day of gun season, CO Kritz was patrolling the area when two hunters told her that the roadway was blocked again. This time, the suspect cut down multiple trees and used a tractor to block off the roadway. CO Kritz was able to follow the tractor tire prints back to a camp. CO Kritz patrolled to the camp and interviewed the landowners. One person confessed to blocking off the access road to the state land, so their hunt was not interrupted since his son was coming up to hunt on opening day. CO Kritz issued a citation to the individual for cutting trees on state land.
- **CO Jared Ferguson** was patrolling a county road in northern Iron County when he observed a SXS operator coming at him without his seatbelt on. CO Ferguson made a traffic stop on the ORV and found the individual in possession of a loaded rifle in the front seat. The hunter stated he was hunting on his way back to camp and when CO Ferguson asked for his deer license, he stated he left them at home. He was cited for a loaded firearm in a motor vehicle and no license in possession. While filling out the citation, CO Ferguson observed a set of lights coming at him which turned out to be the man's hunting partner who also had a loaded firearm on a motor vehicle, no helmet, and unregistered ORV. He was cited for loaded firearm and given warnings for the ORV infractions.
- **COs Josh Boudreaux and John Kamps** wrapped up a multi-week investigation regarding an individual who had been sabotaging another person's tree stand on public land, which stemmed from a dispute over a hunting area. The suspect was cutting the straps in such a way that when the individual went to step onto the hang-on stand's platform it would give way, potentially causing them to fall 15 to 20 feet. Fortunately, the victim was able to prevent himself from falling and quickly left the area where he then contacted the local COs. Cameras were placed watching the stand once it was reset and pictures were captured of the suspect once again cutting the straps. After multiple search warrants were executed with assistance of the DNR's Special Investigations Unit, an interview was conducted, and the COs received a full confession from the suspect. Charges are being sought through the Marquette County Prosecutor's Office for multiple misdemeanors including hunter harassment, malicious destruction of property and felony counts of assault with intent to cause great bodily harm less than murder.

Parks & Recreation Division-UP Trails: Ron Yesney, UP Trails Coordinator

All Trails

- Staff and grant sponsors have been very busy preparing for the snowmobile season. Although we have very little snow, the same amount of work goes in preparing the trails – brushing, signing, grading, equipment maintenance, inspections, and paperwork
- ORV riding is still occurring, the firearm deer season halted ORV riding, but a few folks got out and enjoyed the trails during our mild December
- Sponsors continue to install Alpha signage on our ORV routes/trails. The complete installation should be completed in 2021. Thanks to Skip for championing this effort.
- A trail re-route was completed by DNR construction crews in Calumet. A portion of the B ORV trail/UP17 was moved off private land and is now on Calumet Township ownership. This relocation extends from state ownership and provides for secure multi-use connection. A huge **Thank You** to the Township of Calumet who supported the trail system and made this all possible.

Permanent Easements

- 56 miles of permanent trail easement are being purchased from Keweenaw Land Association (KLA) in Gogebic, Ontonagon, Houghton, Iron, and Dickinson Counties. This is being funded through the Snowmobile Trail Easement

Program. This is the first Major acquisition of permanent trail easement in Michigan. This is set to close in December.

- 13 miles of permanent trail easement are being purchased from Lyme Timber in Ontonagon County. This is set to close in December.
- Thanks to staff member Matt Torreano for his efforts in working with the landowners and securing these important easements.

Houghton County Flood

- A \$1.5 million Land and Water Conservation Grant was granted in order to help with the reconstruction of the Lake Linden Grade. This will cover the non-FEMA related work on the grade. We are still working on securing additional funding to move forward with final engineering. Things got slowed due to COVID.
- We are working with Houghton County Recreation Authority and possibly partnering on the reconstruction of the Freda Grade.
- The Houghton to Chassell grade is out for bid. Reconstruction is set to occur in 2021. There are some access issues that need to be resolved. This reconstruction will include the Pilgrim River Bridge.

Rail-Trail Projects

- Korpela to Wakefield trail extension project is moving forward bids were received with one coming in within budget for the installation of two 8' wide box culverts and a 45' long bridge. This will mean that the extension of the Stateline trail into Wakefield will finally be complete in 2021.
- Menominee River Bridge had begun preliminary construction prior to opening back up for the snowmobile season. Full reconstruction is set to occur in 2021.
- Iron Ore Heritage Trail Erosion Project has been completed. This is across the highway from the DNR office in Marquette. This involved the placement of large boulders along the shoreline in 7 different locations to prevent the grade/trail from falling into Lake Superior
- Foster City Bridge Replacement Project in Dickinson County (Felch Grade) is underway again with plans to advertise for bids in December and begin construction in June of 2021. We are working with the local road agencies and Tri-County Snowmobile and ORV Club on a snowmobile reroute for this season.
- Design and engineering work on the Sturgeon River Bridge Rehab Project near Loretto in Dickinson County has started. No dates for construction have been determined at this time.
- Funding to begin the design to construction of several culverts/bridges on the Nahma Grade has just been authorized. Plans are to advertise for engineering services later this fall.
- Little Carp Trestle north of Baraga was awarded to MJO contracting and they are currently working on site preparation with the deck replacement to begin early next spring.
- Final design and permit applications are nearly complete on five large culverts that failed in 2020. These sites are on the various rail grades. Construction funding has been requested.

ORV Trails

- Use has lessened on the ORV routes over 150 miles now of routes have had either grading and/or gravel work done since July with more work scheduled through fall.
- The Forest Islands ORV trail/route in Menominee County has begun. This has been an ongoing project with several phases. There is a lot of boardwalk that was too narrow for side by sides that is being widened to accommodate them.
- Alpha signs have been installed. We are about 85% complete.

Snowmobile Trails

- Trail closures include: Trail 109 Houghton County (loss of land control), Trail 15 Baraga/Houghton County (bridge out), Trail 133 Keweenaw County (Logging), Freda Grade and Lake Linden Grade (Houghton County Flood)
- We have new posters this year. "Ride Right" (rider safety) and "Ride Here" (Rider Etiquette for off-trail riders) posters were mailed to the grant sponsors in December.
- There is a new reroute Trail 132 being worked on around Lac La Belle to avoid the ski hill. Work is occurring right now. Access to Lac La Belle will now be via spur

- Hiawatha Trails in Marquette/Gwinn has two groomers this year to better accommodate their mileage. This will improve grooming on these heavily used trails.

Equestrian

- Some brushing and signing work have occurred on the new Thunder Valley connector to the Marquette County Fairgrounds. Local equine groups are planning fall rides.
- Funding for additional loop construction on the Thunder Valley Pathway in Marquette County was just authorized for spending work items for that project will be developed this fall.
- Funding to improve 18 wet areas on the Cedar River Pathway in Menominee County was also approved with construction scheduled for next season.

Non-Motorized

- Wetmore Pond Driveway and Parking improvements in Marquette County will be completed the first week of November.
- Single track trail construction is underway at the Days River Pathway in Delta County. Funding for improvements to the existing trail were approved with construction planned for next season.
- A Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund (MNRTF) grant was secured for additional trail marking and trail improvements at Little Presque Isle Recreation Area in Marquette
- An easement dispute occurred on the North Country Trail (NCT) in Marquette County. DNR staff worked with NCT staff to send a letter to the landowner regarding property rights to the trail/road in this area

Wildlife Division: John DePue, Wildlife Biologist-West UP

Bear season update

- The 2020 bear season ended at the end of October and resulted in the registration of 288 bears in the Amasa Bear Management Unit (BMU), a 11% decline from 2019. In the Bergland BMU in 2020, 240 bears were registered, a 15% increase from 2019. In the Braga BMU the number of bears registered for the 2020 season was 307 bears, an increase of 7% from the 2019 season. Hunter satisfaction was good, most hunters saw several bears during their hunt and while harvested bear size was variable, it was typical in that most were smaller bears.

Deer

- The Deer Camp Survey is a cooperative effort between the DNR and numerous UP hunters for the 16-day regular firearm season. Survey materials were sent out to approximately 565 camp contacts before the firearm season. In 2019, just over 1800 hunters participated from 443 camps and we are hopeful for similar reporting this year. Data will be analyzed in January once the forms are returned and results will be reported to participating camps in mid-winter. Results include sighting rates, hunter success rates and hunter opinions among other things. This information helps us better understand the population trends, composition of the deer herd, and the issues that are important to hunters concerning deer management. Several UP sportsmen's groups have generously offered prizes for a drawing to support the survey.
- The 2020 firearm deer season has concluded, and preliminary information indicates that deer numbers checked at DNR check stations open through all of deer season (Escanaba and Norway only) are down around 18% from last year. Other main DNR check stations were only open for the first 4 days of firearm season. The number of deer checked were down at these stations as well, about 25% overall. There were multiple factors unrelated to deer herd numbers that affected how many deer came in to check stations this season including the global pandemic, the Governor's 3 week "stay at home order", reduced check station hours, reduced disease surveillance area, and the poor weather conditions for hunting early in the season.
- Once winter settles in and deer migration has occurred, staff will begin the annual opportunistic winter deer track survey concentrating in and around deer wintering complexes to indicate deer presence or absence in areas of the UP in an effort to continually monitor use of wintering areas.

CWD

- The DNR has tested 2020 deer statewide this year for CWD. In the U.P. 333 deer have been tested for CWD from the Core Surveillance Area with the majority of those coming from Dickinson county. No additional positive deer have been detected to date in the UP samples and 17 positive animals have been detected in the lower peninsula this year with 198 total positives since testing began in 2015.